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WAUKEGAN — The award of a \$1 million Smaller Learning Communities grant to Waukegan public schools has been announced by U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk, R-Highland Park.

The grant, awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, will be used to enhance and expand smaller learning communities at Waukegan High School, Kirk said.

The project "implements strategies designed to connect students with adults at the school through personalized strategies that complement smaller learning communities in place," he said.

The \$1 million grant is for a five-year period and will help pay for a "high-tech" academy with interactive reading and math labs, Kirk said.

The grant also is to be used to pay for Twilight and Saturday schools, summer programs at the Lake County Vocational/Technical Center and increased guidance counseling.

"Increasing drop-out rates, low test scores and rising gang activity in Waukegan shows a critical need for a Smaller Learning Communities program at Waukegan High School," Kirk said.